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For many years I have wanted to write down my life's story for my children and especially for my grandchildren, so that they may understand where I come from and the experiences that made me into the person that I am. Since I am a poor story teller I hope I can make this interesting for you. The next question was what kind of format to use, in order to accompany my tale with photos and memorabilia I chose this method.

I was born in Chemnitz, Saxony, Germany to my mother (Mutti) Else Pottlitzer Berdass and my father (Pappa) Max Berdass, along with an older brother Fritz Phillip Berdass who at close to 2 years old poked his finger at me and stated Pappa which means dolly, this nickname stuck and he continues to call me that to this day.

Ours was a loving caring home, we lived in a large corner house in the middle of the town. The two bottom floors were occupied by our store which was Max Berdass Kuchenhaus which sold every conceivable item one would use in ones kitchen including many different sets of china dishwear. This was set up like individual table settings on the second level, it was a beautiful display, I used to enjoy just looking at it. The second floor had 2 apartments and on the third floor was our apartment. It was quite spacious with 3 bedrooms and living and dining rooms, the dining room was on the corner with 3 big windows where Mutti kept her plants, it was sunny and I remember her growing hyacinths upside down in dark colored glasses.

Like most people, I do not remember much about my early years, but I do remember that every Friday evening Pappa would come home with a gift for Mutti, a bunch of flowers, a box of candy or something, setting the mood for Shabbat dinner, she always lit Shabbat candles and Pappa would sing Kidush followed by a festive meal. All Jewish holidays were observed in our home in much the same manner, we belonged to we belonged to a large synagogue whose Rabbi was Dr. Fuchs and there in a large hat box on a shelf resided Pappa's top hat, which he would wear on the high holidays.

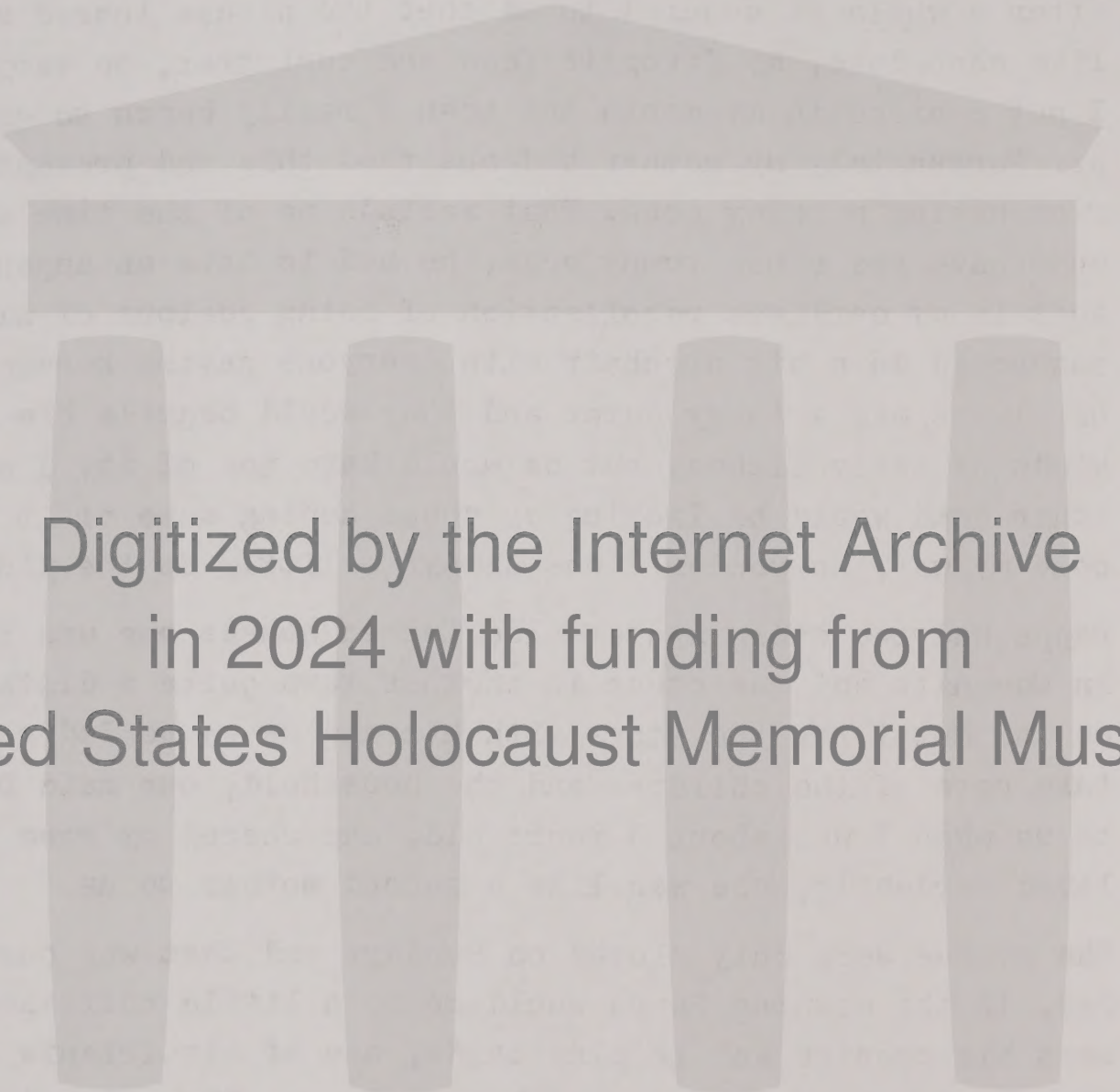
My parents led an active working and social life and I remember one evening in particular when they had a party and their friends used to come into our bedrooms to kiss us good-night. This evening it was raining very hard one of the ladies tended to wear

a lot of make-up which had begun to run down her face and made her look scary, from that time on I have never liked makeup.

Another time friends brought me a gift of a small brown little doll, I was delighted and played with her the way my Pappa played with me lifting her up against the wall and letting her drop, well - she broke into many pieces and I sat on the floor crying, after a while it occurred to me that the pieces looked very much like chocolate, my favorite food and comforter, so very slowly I put a piece in my mouth and then I really began to gobble it up. Fortunately my mother had observed this and prevented me from having a tummy ache. That reminds me of the time my brother must have had a bad tummy ache, he had to have an appendectomy, that is my earliest recollection of being jealous of him. He was enthroned in a big armchair with everyone paying homage to him. He always was a fussy eater and they would beguile him with all kinds of tasty dishes, but he would have none of it. I on the other hand would be licking my chops hoping some of it would come my way, no wonder I was always a little on the plump side.

Pappa had two other stores also Kuchen houses one was located in Chemnitz and the other in another town quite a distance from us and Mutti ran the store with him and so we needed a maid to take care of the children and the household, our maid Dora came to us when I was about 3 years old, she shared my room and I loved her dearly, she was like a second mother to us.

The stores were only closed on Sundays and that was our family day. In the morning Pappa would go to a little coffeehouse to meet his cronies and to play cards, one of his friends was Herr Abraham Brust of whom you will hear later. Then around lunch time we would look out of the window to see Pappa coming across Theater Platz where we lived and Mutti could tell instantly how the rest of the day would go. After a light meal we would pile into our car which I remember was a Buik and drive to the country, where Pappa would take us children for walks through the woods and Mutti would meet her other lady friends and visit over coffee and pastries. Pappa enjoyed driving and was always in competition with this other car belonging to the Stein family whose car was driven by a chauffeur, Fritz inherited this liking for cars and from my earliest recollection could instantly identify any model in detail.



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When I was about 3 years old Dora was giving Fritz and me our bath, my Pappa's shaving brush was sitting nearby, Fritz picked it up and proceeded to lather up my face. Dora had left the room for a moment and when she returned took one look at me and said "now you will not be able to find a husband and get married", so I began to scream on top of my lungs, everyone knows that all fairytales end with the prince marrying the princess and they live happily ever after. Pappa heard this screaming all the way downstairs in the store and he came pounding up the stairs accusing Dora of harming his children, she of course related what had transpired and he sat down by the side of the tub and faithfully promised that no matter what would happen, he would find me a husband, and I am convinced that he would and that he did.

We lived about 1 hour ride from a mountainous region right on the border with Chekoslovakia, where we used to go to ski in the winter months. Fritz was an excellent skier, he was a good athlete all around. I did fine, but nothing to write about, Pappa used to tell me that I left a grease stain in the snow when I fell down. One time as we were on the road in our car the roads were very icy and this mountain road had a steep drop on one side Fritz asked Pappa to stop the car and he would get out and walk home, but we all made it home safely.

As you can see, my early childhood was very pleasant and uneventful, I was Pappa's darling little daughter and Mutti seemed to favour Fritz and so things were very evenly divided.

The year I celebrated my 6th birthday I began school, that day Mutti and Dora met me after school and presented me with a "Zuckertute" a big cardboard cone shaped container filled with goodies and school supplies. Every evening before dinner Pappa would sit in one of the big leather armchairs with each child sitting on one knee and he would ask us what we had done that day and we would relate all about our activities. One day I asked him for money to buy blotting paper, you are probably wondering what that is, you have to remember that in those days we did not have ballpoint or fountain pens, but used a metal tipped pen which we dipped into a little inkwell. Once in a while a little too much would be on the pen causing it to leave little puddles of ink which we would blot up with blotting paper.

Pappa gave me money for the blotting paper, the next day when I went out to purchase it I had to pass by a very fine candy store - would you believe I went in and spent my money on candy instead, oh dear! That evening as usual Pappa listen to our activities and asked me if I had bought the blotting paper and I lied and said yes, not knowing that he had observed my going into the candy store when I went shopping. Well he told me to fetch it and show it to him, which of course I could not do and so the truth came out. Pappa was very angry with me and said: lies have very short legs, they can't run very fast and they always got caught, so let that be a lesson to you.

I can't remember much about my school years, the only teacher I recall was my first grade a Fraulein Hahn I liked her. At the beginning of my second school year I had a very rude awakening, the first hour daily was devoted to religious instruction and not knowing this I was in class the teacher told the children how the Jews killed Jesus showing them pictures of the crucifixion, do you still wonder why we have antisemitism? I of course knew that I was Jewish, but of course had never heard this horrible tale before and only wished to disappear. After that I did not attend religious instruction again and my parents did their best to explain.

I had made friends with a couple of little girls and we used to meet halfway to school and walk the rest of the way together. After school Fritz and I would play in the little park which was opposite our house.

During these years the Nazi party was forming and gaining strength and bands of Hitler groups would march in the streets, with flags flying singing songs with each carrying a billyclub in order to beat up anyone who opposed their views, to this day I have an aversion to parades, they bring back unpleasant memories of Nazi Germany.

The year I was 7 years old the bottom fell out of my life, one evening the end of May or early June 1930 Pappa had gone to put the car in the garage which was several blocks away on a side street. As he returned to our house this troop of Nazis were marching by, he was a cigar smoker and on occasion would expectorate, they took this as an affront to them and set upon him with the billyclubs causing a skullfracture of which he died a couple of days later. I recall hearing the commotion in the street and sensing a terrible tragedy, my world was beginning to crumble.

I do not remember the burial, Mutti may have thought that I was too young, but I do remember the Shiva period and all these people coming to console us and telling me they knew how I felt, but in my heart I screamed silently my Pappa, my protector, my champion was no more.

Every Sunday morning we would walk up the Kasberg to the cemetery to visit his grave. Fortunately we remembered all the good times we had enjoyed and although that was comforting, we then missed him even more. We attended Friday night services to say Kadish and that helped to bring us closer to the Jewish community. In my heart I was always convinced that although my Pappa was not with me physically he was there watching over me and somehow protecting me.

His death was noted in the newspaper since he was a respected businessman in the city, but my two little girlfriends with whom I walked to school informed me that they could no longer walk with me because I was Jewish. Fortunately the Jewish community had girlscouts and boyscout groups and the activities surrounding that filled a great void in our social life, because movie theaters and other public places displayed large signs "Juden verboten". I remember one event for which we were all putting on a skit and I had a small part in it, guess what - I became mute and could not bring out a word, I was so embarrassed. I made up my mind that this would not happen to me again and it has not. For all these Jewish Youth groups members of the community provided us with large grounds with a soccer field and areas in which we could have contests of high-jumping or long-jumping and all kinds of spots.

Also maybe 15-30 miles out of town a farm was put at our disposal where we would camp overnight and do all the things scouts do. In particular I remember Gerda Gattel she used to read stories to us with beautiful diction and emotion, to hear her was a real treat. She and her husband Gerard now reside in New York and we have continued our friendship on a very limited basis to this day.

For my eighth birthday my Tante Grete gave me a piano for my birthday gift, this was about 3 months after Pappa's death and it truly gave me a great deal of comfort and the opportunity to let out my feelings good or bad. I began taking lessons and enjoyed playing, but never became a pianist in the real sense. On the other hand Fritzi would hear a movie score, come home and sit down at the piano and play the whole thing by heart beautifully.

You have not met my extended family yet and right now seems to be a good time to introduce them on my Pappa's side his father died before I was born, he lost one brother fighting for Germany in world war 1 he was killed and 1 brother died of pneumonia. He also had a sister Alma Berdass Hauschner, this tante had a daughter Edith Hauschner Schuftan. They resided in a city called Breslau which was quite far from Chemnitz and we did not get to see them, but I do remember visiting them by myself when I was about 11. My Oma (grandmother) was a frail little lady with white hair, she baked most delicious sugar cookies and always remembered our birthdays with a gift package. My birthday is in August and Oma had sent the usual package and knowing how much I loved hot dogs had included a pound of kosher hot dogs, we did not keep kosher at home. Well the package arrived and Mutti was away on vacation and we were home alone with Dora, who opened up the package and said "these hot dogs stink, we have to throw them out" with that I informed her that she does not know anything about kosher hot dogs - they are supposed to stink! Fortunately her opinion prevailed and we enjoyed fresh hot dogs.

On my maternal side we had a large loving family all of whom we would get together with several times a year in Berlin which was about a 3 hour train ride from our home. My Oma on that side died when I was very young and Mutti related this story to me: they came from Briesen West Preussen an area which sometimes belonged to Poland and sometimes to Germany. When they lived there it was Germany and before or during world war 1 they were given the option of choosing to live in Poland or Germany. They opted for Germany and moved to Berlin, for the property they had given up they received certificates for which they were to be reimbursed after the war. Oma very carefully put them away and when the time came to reclaim them we was unable to find them. This distressing problem caused her to have a heart attack and die, when her daughters went through her effects they found these papers very carefully preserved among her linens. German women were very proud of their linens and began accumulating them from the time they were little girls, each item was embroidered with a monogram, every 4-6 sheets were held together by two ribbons so they would stack neatly.

My Opa (grandfather) Sally Pottlitzer had a clothing store in Briesen from my earliest memory he had a small Kuchenhaus with his apartment in the back, just around the corner from his oldest daughter Grete.

Grete Pottlitzer Loewenthal was the oldest of Mutti's sisters, she was married to onkel Emil, they lived in this lovely large apartment in Berlin where we spent many holidays and good times together. Grete was an artist with a typically artistic temperament and although she had 4 children she could shut herself off in her music room and practise piano for 6-7 hours a day. A distant cousin was their housekeeper and did all the cooking etc. My oldest cousin Gert is about 8-10 years older than I, Kucki or Ernest is 5 years my senior, they used to wrestle and fight with my brother and are responsible for the one and only spanking I ever received from my Pappa. They were wrestling Fritz and being older and stronger having the upper hand I was watching and clapping my hands and being delighted, for Fritz always won when we fought, then Pappa saw what was happening and I got a lecture on family loyalty, *and a spank* Gert and Kucki were very handsome Gert blond and blue eyed, very intelligent, in my early teens I had a crush on him. Kucki used to play the gitar and sing ballads, he is very dark and I adored him also. Kucki made his way to Australia where he eventually became an engineer and partowner of a ski-lift. He continues to ski and next month will go to Austria for a few weeks of skiing and then on to Israel to celebrate his 75th birthday with his younger brother Fritz and family. Kucki helped to bring the rest of his family to Australia, Gert had gone to Italy and made his way to Australia, he eventually earned himself a Ph.D. in physics and has helped to set up standards for nuclear medicine and has come to the Bureau of standards on several occasions to work. So we have had the good fortune to visit both Gert and Kucki and we continue to keep in touch.

Hilde is about 5-7 years younger than I and Fritz 2 years more, they were beautiful children and I remember sharing their bedroom when we came to visit them. Tante Grete would always have much entertainment planned for us children and we would go to museums, plays and other cultural events.

When Hilde was around 15-16 she was diagnosed as schizophrenic and institutionalized, where she has remained to this day, what a pity!

Fritz became an electrical engineer and married Lilly, they have 3 children Yael, Judy and Harold, about 15 years ago that family decided to make Aliyah and they have been living in Kibbutz Kfutzat Shiller, we get together everytime we visit Israel, we travel to Rehovot.

Tante Lilly Pottlitzer Moses was the second oldest sister and she was married to onkel Karl, they had no children and they left for America sometime in 38/39 and I never saw them again. Mutti was next and then Tante Ruth who was married to Unkel Karl ~~MOSES~~ Cohn and they had one son Frank, they lived in Breslau and we did not get to see them much, except at special family functions. We were all together for Opa's 80th birthday when all the grandchildren put on a skit for him, that was the last time that entire family was together.

Tante Ruth and Mutti were very close almost like twins and Tante Ruth came breezing in every 3 to 4 weeks and would stay a view days, she travelled a lot buying for their store which I think was a sport goods store. The two of them would go away on vacations together, they were both very beautiful young women, I adored Tante Ruth.

Last, but by no means least Unkel Hans was the youngest of that family and as the only son after 4 girls, he was very spoiled, but of course I only hear stories about that. When I was a teenager hans married Gina and I remember crocheting a beautiful pillow cover backed with velvet for their wedding gift. In Berlin he had been a grain merchant and the others also had been succesful businessmen. These three families made their way to America in 38 or 39 and I saw them again when I came in 1946.

In Germany there were two school systems, one public which would go to eighth grade and a High school for which one had to pay and take an entrance exams and so I began to attend the Hoherer Handelshochschule which was a commercial High school and included typing, shorthand and book-keeping 4 years of English and 1 year of French. By this time the Nazis were in power, I did not have a single friend in school and by the time I completed the 8th grade a law had been passed which prohibited me from continuing my education.

Mutti that summer was going on vacation to Italy with Tante Ruth and I accompanied her when she went to the Iwria Bank to get Lira, in the Bank I told her that I would like to work there and she told me to ask right then and there and I was hired. The 1½ years I worked there were good, it was a Jewish owned bank and everyone who worked there was Jewish. I had a savings account and saved my salary. My job was as a messenger girl, but I did quite a lot of typing and taking dictation etc. and I was happy.

Before the Nazis came to power there was an election and I remember Dora and Mutti talking about how to vote and saying that they felt it was not a secret ballot, they were probably right. As soon as they became the "illegitimate" government life became more and more difficult for us. We had to carry an identification card with a large J on the cover, every girl was automatically named Sara and every male Abraham. The next law I remember was that we had to give up all of our gold and silver, we had to bring it to the police station, we were only allowed to keep one small item per person, Mutti kept her wedding band, I kept a small gold watch from Pappa and Fritz kept Pappa's Kidush cup with his initials. Then when Fritz became 14 we were not allowed to employ a gentile live-in maid. Fortunately a year or so prior to that, Dora and I had gone for vacation to Bad Kissingen a spa for people with allergies, she met a man there whom she married and they lived in Leipzig. Dora came from a large family of farmers and we would be invited there to spend a week on the farm and I also visited her in Leipzig she almost got into trouble for that, because someone reported to the authorities that she had a Jewish child visiting her. Eventually another law was passed prohibiting Jews from owning property. Fritz and I had bicycles and around holiday season we had to deliver for our store.

About the time of Fritz's Bar-Mitzvah our Rabbi told Mutti that there were families in America who wanted to adopt us, this offer was also made to another young widow in our community. We turned down this offer, but the other family availed themselves of it and of course the children helped to bring out their mother. Now with hindsight, we know we should have taken that opportunity.

All our social life revolved around our homes and the Jewish Community and by the time I was 14 I had a boyfriend Peter Gurau, who lived right across the street from us. We wanted to go skiing and went to the bus station to ask if we could share a seat and only buy one ticket, they gave us permission and one Sunday we went up by bus, we skied all day but on our last run down the mountain it became very foggy and I lost Peter. My cousin Gert was spending his vacation there and I went to his lodging and asked him to go and find Peter, which he did. Peter survived Auschwitz and married Shoshana another survivor, they moved to Israel, somewhere along the way he lost an arm, many years later we renewed our friendship in Israel.

When a memorial forest was dedicated in memory of the Jews of Chemnitz in Israel Fritz and Margo attended that dedication and they met Peter there, he had changed his name to Shimon Giora. We visited with them every time we were in Israel and they also came to us once. Peter has since died of a massive heart attack, but we still keep in touch with Shoshana.

Things had been going from bad to worse and reached a crescendo by Christallnacht 1938, we sensed that the Nazi's were waiting for some excuse to start brutal repression, when the news came about the killing of the German Ambassador in Paris at the hands of a Polish Jew, we knew serious retaliation would follow. Fritz left that day for Berlin and made friends with a young woman who worked in the American Embassy, she eventually helped his paper work to go smoothly and by January he had his affidavit to come to the USA.

Mr. Julius Lichtenstein, who had a small apartment next to ours, and who would soon become our stepfather also left by train, he however was picked up by the Gestapo in Dusseldorf at the station and taken to Buchenwald concentration camp.

Fritz called Tante Grete and she told him that Onkel Emil had been picked up and was taken to Spandau prison, but since the Gestapo would not come again, Fritz could live there.

Christallnacht the Nazis broke about 12 huge plate glass windows downstairs, while Mutti and I huddled together wondering what would come next. Anytime during the night or day the Gestapo would come calling on us, looking for Fritz and Julius and searching for money. Mutti had money hidden away in large crocks which were filled with different grains, they never found it, but they did succeed in scaring us to the point where I shared Mutti's bedroom and we would talk late into the night.

At that time all of our bank accounts were frozen and each family was only allowed to withdraw a given amount per person. Fritz needed money and Mutti sewed about \$500 inbetween the black persian fur and the collar of my winter coat and that is how I travelled to Berlin by train to bring him the cash. Thank goodness Fritz accomplished what he had set out to do and had his papers to leave in February of 1939. We had heard from Julius and Mutti arranged for him to go to Holland, they married 2 weeks after Fritz left and 2 weeks later Julius left for Holland.

Julius Lichtenstein was a big man about 6 feet tall weighing about 200 lb, by profession he ~~had~~ was some kind of engineer and besides he was part owner of a ball bearing plant on the outskirts of Chemnitz. Along this factory ran a little stream in which he would go trout fishing every Sunday. When he returned from Buchenwald at the end of December or the beginning of January he was a broken man, gaunt with his head shaven with stooped shoulders. Right after Fritz left for America in February Mutti and he were married in our apartment and a couple of weeks later he left for Holland, he came to Hook Van Holland to see me off to England and that was the last time I saw him. When war broke out and the Germans occupied Holland he was arrested again and sent to Theresienstadt and that is where he was killed.

After Christallnacht Ruth Brust a good friend of mine wrote from England to ask if I would like to go to England with the Children's Transport. They found a lady to guarantee for me and I received my papers to go to England in April. Poor Mutti! One by one she was encouraging us to leave and save our lives while she suffered the trauma of each heart rending farewell. Because she had remarried and her name changed to Lichtenstein all her papers were in a beaurocratic mess, and although she had an affidavit to come to America, nothing materialized.

During the months that we shared her bedroom we used to talk late into the night and she related events from her childhood. She told me that they would always have a Succah in their home, but that it was very small and with invited guests, there was not enough room for all the children, so the youngest ones who had been excluded went upstairs and poured water on the diners in the Succah. Obviously she came from an observant family and I asked her how come none of her family kept Kosher and she explained that when they were children they were all very skinny and subject to chest diseases and their doctor insisted that the children be given bacon daily. So that dear lady had separate dishes and pots to cook the bacon in. When these children grew up and got married they could not see any purpose in keeping Kosher. She regretted not having done so and felt that Hashem was punishing the Jews for straying so far from his commandments, I have often wondered about that.

Mutti and each of her sisters were married to men about 20 years their senior, because they were successful men and the marriages

During these months Mutti and I grew much closer to each other, I had always been jealous of Fritz, I was a tattletale and a true pest of a little sister. In fairness he was no angel either, he would take equipment of my bike and use it on his, but what hurt me the most was the fact that by the age of 13 I was fully developed, a lot more than normal and he was embarrassed to be seen with me. When we had to go somewhere together he would walk 10 paces ahead of me. He was an excellent athlete and won trophies for running, he was a marvelous soccer player and extremely well liked and popular, they gave him a nickname "Bolle" after a fun song he used to sing. After Pappa died Fritz became quite unruly and Mutti sent him to a religious boarding school somewhere in the countryside, the first thing he did there was to fall out of a tree and break his arm. He was not a good student, school probably bored him, and Dora would forge Mutti's signature on his school reports, eventually Mutti was called to meet with his teacher and found out what was going on. We had this very long hall with highly polished lenoleum and Dora would chase Fred up and down this hallway with the carpetbeater, they would wear themselves out, he never got spanked.

Mutti tried to prepare me for life ahead, I marvel at her courage and fortitude and before we knew it the evening of my departure had arrived, very late that night I had to board a train with hundreds of other children going to Hook Van Holland, I remember nothing of our parting. The youngest of the children was a 6 month old baby, this poor little one cried the entire trip and the ¹rst of us were crying inwardly, with our papers fastened to our clothing. When the train entered Holland and stopped somewhere, women came and gave us sandwiches and drinks. In Hook Van Holland Julius came to wish me goodbye as I boarded the ship. The next day we arrived in Harrieh England and boarded a train to London, my thoughts were very gloomy and travelling through the suburbs and slum area of the outskirts of London enhanced this feeling. We were taken to this huge arena where the people who had sponsored us were awaiting us and where I was reunited with Ruth Brust and her mother. We got into a cab and travelled to Golders Green a beautiful suburb of London where Mr. and Mrs. Brust rented a room from a Mrs. Feldman. Mr. Brust was away on business and I shared the bedroom with Mrs. Brust. Mrs. Feldman was a lovely lady who had 2 children a girl of about 13 and a boy about 11, she was a

divorcee and told me that she guaranteed for me in order to save my life, but that she would not be able to keep me and send me to school. You must wonder why Ruth Brust was not staying with her mother, she had been sent to England to school several years earlier and she lived with an English family who had other girls her age and they all went to school together. Ruth's brother Manfred was in an English boarding school. Mrs. Brust had a sister Mrs. Reiss who lived in the same apartment complex with their aged mother, Mr. Reiss their daughter Helen Manfred and Jossi their sons. This whole family helped to find a job for me, by law I was not allowed to work, that is why England would only allow children in. The first interview I had was in a Jewish home to become a maid and they hired me on the spot, I was supposed to start the next morning at 6 A.M. They had another refugee youngster working there and I of course began to question her about why she was leaving and she informed me that she was having a nervous breakdown, she showed me that they only had 2 dish towels and that these had to be washed out and hung up to dry each day - several other things I do not wish to repeat, regardless I was set to begin the next day. I must have set my alarm clock for 4 A.M., because it was quite a distance to get there, but Mrs. Brust awoke and informed me that she would not let me accept this job because I had been crying in my sleep all night. Before long I indeed was hired by a Jewish family to take care of two boys about 6 and 3, with them lived their grandmother and both parents worked in their jewelery store. When I said they hired me that is not quite true, it was more of a barter system where I received room and board in exchange for taking care of the boys and helping with the housework, if I received pay it had to be negligible, because Mutti paid for letters to be sent double in Germany, because I did not have enough money to buy stamps to write to her. My job was to walk the 6 year old to and from school several times a day and to watch over the 3 year old and so I became a mother's helper. Otherwise I was treated kindly and became a member of their family. It was only when I would relate what was going on in Germany that I would get this feeling that nobody would believe that we were telling the truth. That summer I remember spending time with them at Brighton Beach, as a foreigner I had to report to the police in each new location.

I was beginning to adjust to living in England and speaking English and made every effort to speak the language without that strong German accent. In due course I heard of other young people from home and we began to meet each other. The Reiss home was always open to all us children and the grandmother would mother and comfort us, she was a wonderful lady. I celebrated my 16th birthday with a loving card from Mutti and a couple of weeks later the beginning of Sept. England was at war with Germany and I became an enemy alien and could only write to Mutti through Fritz or Tante Ruth in America.

Ruth Brust with her brother and parents were on a ship going to Canada it was torpedoed and sunk, but miraculously the whole family was saved!

Later that year I had to go before a tribunal to determine whether I was an enemy alien or a true refugee, well this family that I was living with had been travelling to several places and I with them, they were afraid that London would be bombed and that is why they traveled around. The Judge decided that I was seeing much too much of England and even though I explained the circumstances to him, I was designated as an enemy alien. Just about that time Mrs. Feldman's aged mother had a heart attack and she called me and asked me to become a companion to her mother and live with her and take care of her. Certainly I owed that lady a lot and would not think of turning her down and so I became a companion to this lady, we got along well, but it did not last long because I was contacted by the authorities to show up at a given destination with all my possessions. I along with thousands of other refugees were transported and interned on a Isle of Man, a lovely summer resort area between England and Ireland. There we were billeted in hotels I think I shared a room with 3 other girls. We had to cook and clean for ourselves, but otherwise were free to do what we pleased. I applied for a job in the commandant's office, because I needed to work in order to buy basic toiletries and stamps in order to keep in touch with my family in America and Australia, so I began working just a few hours maybe twice a week. I became very close friends with the other girls, we became a close knit group. One day taking a walk I met Mutti's best girlfriend from Briesen Hannah Wolff a registered nurse, not married. She and I embraced and she then became the mother hen to me and my friends. Eventually I received a letter from Tante Grete from Australia, telling me to contact Bubie Pottlitzer a distant cousin, who

had joined the British army and that he would vouch for me and I would be released from the internment camp. Although we were certainly not mistreated I can not begin to tell you how demoralizing this whole episode was to all of us. First of all families who had managed to come out together were now separated, because the men had another camp on the other side of the island and some of them were sent to internment camps to Canada and Australia and some of those ships were also sunk with hundreds of lives lost, all of it being completely beyond our control. Most of us felt very bitter, because we were truly refugees and the real spies or enemy aliens had such wonderful substantiated papers and were never suspected. In any case I was released and on a New Years Eve 40/41 I was sent back to London arriving very late that evening with my 2 large trunks I took a taxi to a hostel which the refugee organization had provided for me. An air-raid was in progress and the whole city was blacked out and I had no idea where I was going and the ride seemed endless. When I got to my destination a New Years Eve party was in progress with the girls from the hostel and boys from another hostel near by. The lady of the house took me upstairs to a bedroom occupied by several girls and told me to sleep in a bed belonging to a girl who was away, she did not provide me with clean linens and I decided then and there that I would not stay there longer than I had to. There were about 20 girls altogether there, we had to wash up in a kitchen sink with only cold water, since there was no black-out curtain in that room it had to be done in the dark, Once a week we went to a public bath. Most of the girls in the hostel worked in the garment factories in the East End of London, they would leave early in the morning with a brownbag lunch and have a long subway ride to work and get back in time for dinner. The money they earned was collected by the owner of the hostel and they were given pocket money to buy necessities. A few days after my arrival I had an appointment with one of the ladies from the refugee organization to take me job hunting, she asked me what I wanted to do and I told her that I wanted to become a maid, thinking that at least I would have my own room and would keep it as clean as I wanted and it would get me away from that hostel. We had no closets or drawers and lived out of our suitcases. She told me that there was a job advertised for an elevator operator at the Y.W.C.A. she let me go into the interview alone, my only request was that they let me live there, the lady said "we have never had an elevator

operator live in, but with the bombing of London it was difficult for people to get to work in the morning and everybody who lived in the building slept together in the shelter which was a huge swimming pool in the basement which had been covered and had been set up with cots, there must have been several hundred women who slept there. Besides that they gave me a closet for my things and I had use of the sewing room and took my meals in the cafeteria. I enjoyed my work and met many lovely people and made a lifetime friend Vera Rance Kenneford who now lives in Cyprus and we correspond to this day. Vera had lost her lovely home to a bombing and since she held an important position in some office she had moved into a room at the Y.W.C.A., her husband was in the army overseas. She inquired about my previous schooling and encouraged me to go to night school to take up shorthand and typing, then in the evening she would dictate letters to me and I would type them up on her portable machine and of course very businesslike I filed them in some folder. Since Vera's job had something to do with shipping and transportation of materials that was the subject matter of these fictitious letters. What can I tell you - someone found these files and reported me as a spy - here we go again. I was called into the directors office and of course explained what it was all about, and as soon as Vera returned from work she also came and of course confirmed what I had said, but I decided that I needed to look for another position, I did not feel comfortable there any longer. As luck would have it I received a phone call from Mrs. Reiss telling me that her mother had been diagnosed with throat cancer and that they needed help, someone to take care of her and run the household. As I told you earlier I adored this grandmother and owed a debt to that whole family and so I left London for the town of Harrogate where they were renting a house. When I first arrived she was not terribly ill and she taught me how to keep a kosher home, the family was orthodox and kept the Sabbath. Eventually Mrs. Menasche became bedridden and I admit to great feelings of incompetence in trying to care for her. After about 1 year this lovely lady died in her own bed and the rest of the family with me returned to their apartment in Golders Green. Lillian the oldest of their children was already dating Hyman Davis Esq. and they were married within another year. Since the beginning of the war I had been corresponding with Mutti via America, after America entered the conflict began the Red Cross messages which were no more than 25 words.

From the time that I was released from the internment camp, thanks to Bubie we began going out together and after I returned to London with the Reiss family Mrs. Reiss was making every effort for me to marry Bubie, but I knew that the chemistry was not right and avoided that pitfall, I was quite confident that Pappa would find the right husband for me.

Sometime toward the end of 1942 a law was passed which affected young women who were not married and over 18, they had a choice of working on a farm, joining the army, airforce or navy or become a nursing student. I opted for nursing and remember the interview I had - the nurse who was the interviewer asked me whether I was the required 5 feet tall and I told her that my height was 4 foot 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches, but that whatever I lack in height I would make up for with enthusiasm and she hired me on the spot. I was assigned to St. Charles Hospital, Ladbroke Grove, one of the London Council Hospitals, and began my training early in 1943. We were provided with uniforms a room to ourselves in the nurses home and meals in the nurses dining room. There were 2 other refugees in training also, our matron Miss Gibbs was a lovely kind woman who told us that we could consider the hospital our home during the 1 month vacation we were given annually. In addition we also received some pay, but this was very minimal indeed and only covered necessities. The first 3 months were a probationary period during which you could be told to leave or you had the option of leaving. These 3 months consisted of 8 hours of daily classroom lectures ^{after} which we then had to write out in books provided for us and which the Sister Tutor corrected daily. Nobody cared how much schooling you had received prior as long as you comprehended and learned what was needed to become a caring and competent nurse. We would spend at least 4-6 hours nightly transcribing our notes, one of the Irish nurses in my class helped me a lot, when you learn a foreign language it does not include medical terminology. I had only been studying for about a month when I came down with a severe case of scarlet fever and was sent to a infectious disease hospital, when I returned I could not continue with my class and had to wait until the next class began. After 6 months ^{wc} you have to pass a National exam or ^{if you could} you can not continue and then the final exam takes place 3 years and 3 months later. I loved nursing and made many friends, but my thoughts were with my mother and step-father and also Fritz who was serving with the American forces in Europe.

When Fritz first joined the army he was stationed out in the middle West and was told to visit with the Moses family who lived in St. Paul, he had previously visited them in Germany and Knew them, and so did I. The Moses family had 5 children Ruth who was married to Max Bern, Margo who had become a lovely young woman and a brother. Margo married Fritz before he shipped out to go overseas, he had changed his name to Fred when he arrived in America, whenever he was able he would send me a few dollars. At one time he was approached by someone who claimed he could get Mutti a visa to go to Cuba, he paid \$5,000.- and unfortunately it was a skam and Fred lost the money he had borrowed and poor Mutti's hopes had been raised.

One of the Years of my nurses training was spent at a hospital in Epsom Downs, it had previously been a mental hospital, it was around that time that the bus-bombs started, one could hear this motor approaching and when the sound stopped it would come down and explode. The last year of our training we returned to St. Charles Hospital, all the streets leading to the hospital were bombed out and just the shells of the buildings were standing, with the black out everything was very eerie and coming home late in the evening with just a flash light to light our way, we would walk down the middle of the road for fear someone or something was hiding in those ruins.

We only had 2 shifts, day shift and night shift from 7 to 7 if you were on day shift you would get 2 hours off during the afternoon, by which time most of the work was completed. If you worked nights for one month out of each year, you moved into a night nurses home, which was in a quiet secluded area and everyone else worked nights and slept during the day and every second week we would get 2 nights off. By the end of my third year and just prior to my final national exam, I again became ill and the doctor told Matron Gibbs that my resistance was very low and I needed a 2 week vacation. She called me to her office and told me what the doctor had said and gave me a ticket to some small town in Kent and told me that I would vacation in her sister's home in the country. When I arrived there a young handsome airforce officer was waiting for me, he was her nephew and home on leave at that time. I spent a delightful 2 weeks in that home, what a lovely family and such kind people! No sooner did I return to London and the dates for the final exam arrived and a letter from the refugee organization telling me that arrangements for me to leave by ship for America, &

I have neglected to tell you that before this time the war in Europe had ended, that however did not mean that we were able to obtain any information about our loved ones, we just kept hoping against hope that miraculously they had escaped the gas chambers. You will see that official information on Mutti was not obtained until 1960 and on Julius not until 1962.

All of that time we had lived with food rationing, each nurse would get her ration of butter and margarine for the week on a little plate and sugar in a jar and we would carry that to the dining room for every meal. Clothing also was rationed, I never had any problem with any of this, because I did not have any money with which to buy these items.

To get back to my story, I received notification from the refugee organization that passage had been booked for me on a Swedish ship for July 12, 1946. I had sat for my final exams, but had not idea and would not get the results until early in August, what if I had failed? A frier promised to telegraph the results to me as soon as they were official. I am happy to tell you that I graduated with "Distinction".

All of this came about very suddenly and I did not have enough time to notify my family in America by letter and so I sent a telegram to Tante Gina and Onkel Hans (Hans Pottlitzer had changed his name to John Potter on arrival in America). I arrived in New York harbor on a hot day the middle of July having passed the Statue of Liberty on the way and I am looking out to see the people on the dock who would be waiting for me - not a soul i knew! Once again I got into a cab with what was left of my wordly possessions and gave the cabby the address. They had a nice apartment around 87 or 88th street near Amsterdam Ave. and aunt ruth lived about 10 blocks away closer to Braodway. I ring the doorbell and there is no response, the cabby tells me to ring the bell that s~~ais~~ Superintendent and a lady comes out, she told me that they had gone on vacation and were with my brother and Margo in St. Paul, but she knew that I was expected and she let me into their apartment and gave me the keyes. In Europe we always took baths, so when I went into their bathroom to bathe I ended up getting a shower. The superintendent gave me directions to my aunt ruth's place and I walked up Broadway and wnet into the first drugstore with a big soda fountain. I had only seen these in movies, and I ordered a big chocolate sunday with all the trimmings, the owner explained American money to me. When I got to Tante Ruth's apartment there was no one at home.

I left a note in their mailbox, telling them how disappointed I was that no one had met me and that I would return to Hans and Gina's home. When I got there the doorbell rang and guess what they had delivered my telegram to the wrong address and was delivered now. Sometime later the bell rang again and there was my cousin Frank, who had come home from college and found my note. We have been very close ever since, he helped me adjust to America. Frank had also been back to Europe with the American army and was now studying under the GI bill of rights, he made the army his career, served many years in Germany (having been born there he spoke the language). Eventually he retired as a full colonel, we were invited to his retirement party which was held on a Yom Kipur eve, so we did not attend. He then went to work for the University of Maryland in an administrative capacity until he retired in 1992. He still works as a consultant. Of course when Tante Ruth came home from work she was surprised to find me there and we had a very joyful reunion, and since Hans and Gina were away I stayed with Tante Ruth and Frank in their home. Uncle Martin died of a massive heart attack the day Frank returned home from the army and from overseas. Sometime later I was reunited with Gina and Hans and of course spoke with my brother on the phone.

My friend Ruth Brust who was by now married to Oskar Fortgang had a little girl Lillian and they were spending that summer at Long Beach, Long Island and invited me to spend the rest of that summer with them. Both my family and Ruth and Oskar did their best to introduce me to eligible men, but to no avail. It was time for me to go to work and I found a job and was hired as a graduate nurse by the director of nursing at the beautiful new Jersey City Medical Center. I had the same responsibilities as the registered nurses and also received the same pay monthly. I used to spend my free time window shopping and very carefully select the purchases I would make on pay-day. In order to get reciprocity here I needed to take a 3 month maternity course, because that was not part of the course in England, but besides that I did not have a highschool diploma and certainly had not had the required years of American history, and so I began attending evening classes at a junior college in Jersey city. Early in 1946 I joined a 3 month class at the Jersey City Medical Center's Margaret Hague Maternity Hospital with about 30 other nurses, I completed the course with a 94 - 96 % grade average. It was at the Margaret Hague that I met Frank, his childhood friend Max Cohen and his wife Ethel were expecting a baby and they lived in Jersey City.

Stuart Cohen was born at the Margaret Hague Maternity Hospital and his mother was assigned to my floor which had 30 semi and private patients. I worked this floor 3-7 shift the only nurse with 2 aides, I called a supervisor to take over the floor while I took her bed in the elevator to the delivery floor, put my patient in it checked her womb for excessive bleeding, took her in bed back into the elevator and down to her room. Ethel was elated she had given birth to a healthy little boy. I ordered tea and toast for her, called her husband to go to see her and later took him around to the nursery to see his son. At that time I still had a very British accent and Ethel asked me if I was a refugee she befriended me and invited me to the baby's brit which was in the hospital because our post partum patients stayed for 10 days. In the meantime I was transferred to the delivery room and the day of the brit she sent another nurse to remind me and make sure that I would attend, I was still in uniform and was interested in witnessing my first Brit Mila ceremony. Frank was introduced to me and Max was supposed to invite me back to their house for the party following, but his mind was on his baby and he displayed all shades of green. A couple of weeks later Ethel called and invited me to Friday evening dinner and told me that Frank wanted to date me, but he was only available on Sunday. I could not get a Sunday off and after about a month Ethel called and told me that I thought I was avoiding going out with him. Just then I worked 11-7 and told her I would go out with him on Sunday, if he would get me back in time to go on duty at 11, and so we had our first date, he took me to New York to see Sophie Tucker and brought me back in time to go to work. We continued dating and in June we had a nurses dance in Newark at a nice hotel and that is when he asked me to marry him, and a week later he made it official at Carnegy lake in Princeton. He asked me what I wanted to be happy and I told him that I hoped for a permanent home with books and music and in time a couple of children. Pappa had made an excellent choice!

I had introduced my previous boyfriends to my aunt Ruth, but that proved to be the kiss of death, so when I met Frank I kept him strictly to myself and only called my family after I had made up my mind. Well, they were so surprised and concerned that they hired a private investigator to check him out, after receiving a good report, they gave us a small engagement party in Onkel Hans and Tante Gina's apartment.

Frank had also not mentioned me to his family, he felt the only one who needed to be certain were the two of us. So the next Sunday he brought

me to Trenton to meet his entire family, his Mom and Dad referred to as Bubbie and Sady, his 3 sister and 2 brothers and their families. Sady did not take a chance on my being Jewish, he pulled out a sidur and asked me to read a hebrew passage, fortunately I knew how.

You must know that the good times of live began again the day I met Frank and he became the love of my life, my most cherished dreams were coming true.

A few weeks after we became engaged I had a routine chest Xray and was told that it showed that I had tuberculosis or TB, but the staff of the medical center offered to cure for me free of charge in a private room at the Pollack TB hospital which was part of the medical center. This is prior to the advent of TB drugs and people would die from this disease, and it could take years to cure, with the patient being bedridden the entire time. How could I impose these problems on Frank, bad enough that I had to cope with it and so I suggested to him that we break our engagement and go our separate way. His fine qualities of loving caring and steadfastness showed immediately when he told me that if we were already married, he would not leave me because ~~XXXX~~ of illness, so once or twice a week he came to visit me in the hospital. With the doctors approval we began planning our wedding, 11 months hence. Dumb me, we could have had a quiet ceremony in a rabbi's study with just our two families, that never even occurred to me, I had to have the white gown and the whole bit. Onkel Hans offered to make it, but only kosher style, that would have insulted Bubbie and Sady. I mentioned this problem to Ruth Fortgang who told me that her parents Mr. and Mrs. Brust wanted to make our wedding in their synagogue, strictly kosher and that it was a mitzvah to do so. It was a beautiful wedding, but the rabbi in an effort to praise the Brust family began to malign or denigrate my family, with the result that Onkel Hans did not talk to me for the next 20 years. Fortunately, Tante Ruth and Frank Cohn and Tante Gina were more forgiving and Fred and Margo at that time could not afford to come. We newlyweds spent one night in New York and then began our drive South for a 2 week honeymoon. On the way we stopped in Morrisville and that is the first time I saw Our house which Frank had began building as soon as we had become engaged, it was almost ready and Russel Gindin our builder promised faithfully that it would be ready to move in on our return. His wife Harriet made a deal with us - if he did not keep his promise, they would have us for dinner - if he kept his word we would host them.

Of course it was not completed and we moved in with Bubbie and Sady and about one month later we moved into our home without electricity and no screens. Harriet kept her promise and we have remained the best of friends for almost 45 years. Frank and I settled into married life after a couple more months I again became ill with TB and this time I went to Debroah, having just become a charter member of the Young Women's League of Deborah. Poor Frank, not only did he not have a wife to cook and clean for him, but he ended up spending all of his spare time visiting me at Deborah, this ent on for about one year, they had begun a treatment called Pneumothorax to collapse the lung to give it the opportunity to heal and so I went to Dr. Klempner weekly and when he felt that I was on the mend he told me that I could get pregnant while he was observing me weekly and so Linda Ray (Rochel) was born Sept. 3 1951, it was on a Labor Day. Frank had given me clear instruction I could only give birth on a Sunday or holiday. She was a lovable baby and we were very happy, but by the time she was 15 mo. old, Xray confirmed that I had TB in my left lung. This time Dr. Klempn suggested that I have a lobectomy to remove the upper lobe of that lung. Sylvia and Red Hirsh came to the rescue, they offered to take Linda into their home for a period of 3 months, so that I would have time to recuperate, they had two boys at that time Lewis and Allen. By now two or three TB drugs had come out and the surgery was followed by a full year of medication, that proved to be the final cure, all together I had been ill for 8 years on and off. A few years later Dr. Klempner told me that I could have another child and on Thanksgiving Day 1956 I gave birth to Michael Lee (Eliezer ben ~~AVX~~ Ephrayim Dovid).

We were a very happy family and I hope that our children have good memories of their youth. Frank worked 6½ days a week and got very little relaxation and so he built our pool, which became the social vocus for our children and their friends and the adults. Once both children were in school full time I began working with Frank in the store, twic he was forced to relocate at a moments notice and one day I observed him rubbing his left arm and chest, he was working up to a heart attack, Dr. Eckstein put him on medication and I kept close watch over his diet, and continued to work alongside him.

Eventually I served as president of Young Women's League of Deborah for 2 years. Years later I served as president of Trenton Chapter of Hadassah for 7 years and also as president of Adath Israel Sisterhood for 2 years.

The rest is your history as much as mine and up to you to relate to your children, there were many highlights such as Linda's Bat-Mitzvah, Confirmation, graduation and going to Penn State. Michael's Bar-Mitzva Confirmation, graduation and college, but the best was his engagement to Lisa Bloomberg their subsequent wedding and three of the loveliest little girls Andy, Lauren and Jenna. This was followed by Rochel's wedding in Baltimore to Yankov (James Edward Bernstein) that union has been blessed with 5 wonderful children Esther, Yehudit, Yitzchak Meir, Avraham Asher, Yehuda Leib and Moshe Aharon, it was our pleasure to be on hand when these children arrived. Our children and grandchildren give us unlimited joy and we hope this will continue for many years to come!!! We are grateful to Hashem for all our blessings.

Over these years many good people have helped me, most of the time I was not in a position to reciprocate or to thank them and so I decided to pass on to others what I have received and be of some help whenever I am able, to care for my community and neighbors. Not to take the good things for granted and to appreciate all the good and fine people I come in contact with.

There is of course so much more, I did not tell you about aunt Edith, aunt Rose, aunt Sylvia, uncle Sam, uncle Louis, but I am not a writer and don't wish to bore you.

